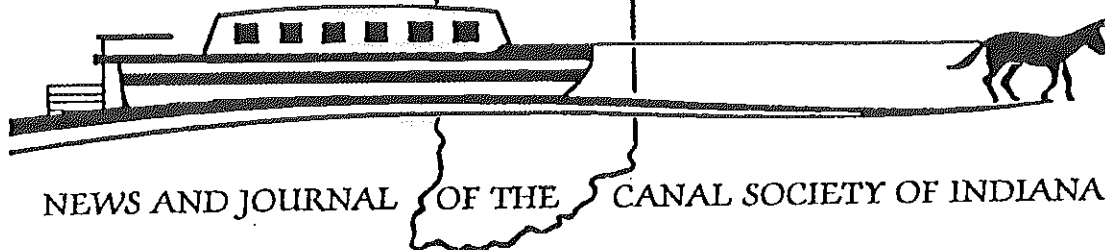


# THE HOOSIER-PACKET



NEWS AND JOURNAL OF THE CANAL SOCIETY OF INDIANA

VOL. 1 NO. 6

P.O. BOX 40087 FORT WAYNE, IN 46804

OCTOBER 2002

## TRANSPORTATION HONORED

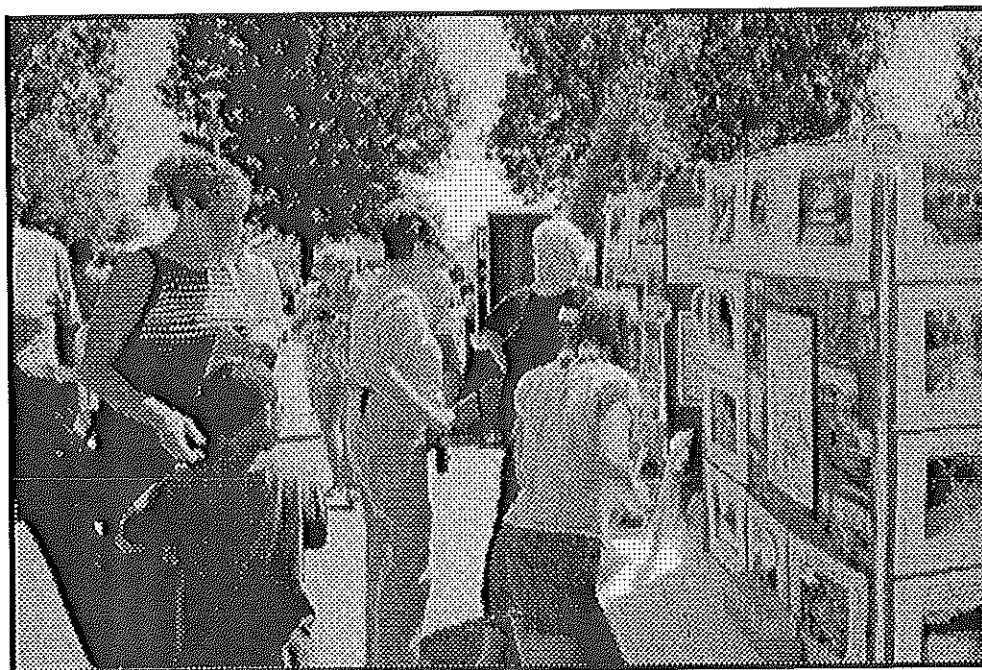


Photo by  
Bob Schmidt

Families attending the kickoff event for the new Indiana state quarter were interested in learning about Indiana's canals. Officials estimated over 3 000 people attended the event held at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

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### **Indiana State Quarter at Indianapolis Motor Speedway** By Carolyn Schmidt

The kickoff event for the new Indiana commemorative quarter, the 19th to be released under the United States Mint's 50 State Quarters Program, was held at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway on Thursday August 8, 2002. Governor Frank O'Bannon's office asked that the Canal Society of Indiana (CSI) participate in the event by setting up a canal display, provide information about the canals, and have two people at the table to answer any questions that the public might ask. Bob and Carolyn Schmidt, CSI president and editor from Ft. Wayne, represented the society. They handed out CSI brochures

EDITOR: CAROLYN SCHMIDT

5205 WAPITI DR. FT WAYNE IN. 46804

260 432-0279

and maps of canals in Indiana & Ohio as well as displaying three large blue boards with a map of Indiana surrounded by 8" x 10" photographs of canal sites. Children who visited the booth looked at two model canal boats and chose one of CSI's past canal tour buttons from a large basket. The children loved wearing the buttons. They advertised CSI while they walked around other exhibits or purchased quarters in the IMS Pagoda Courtyard.



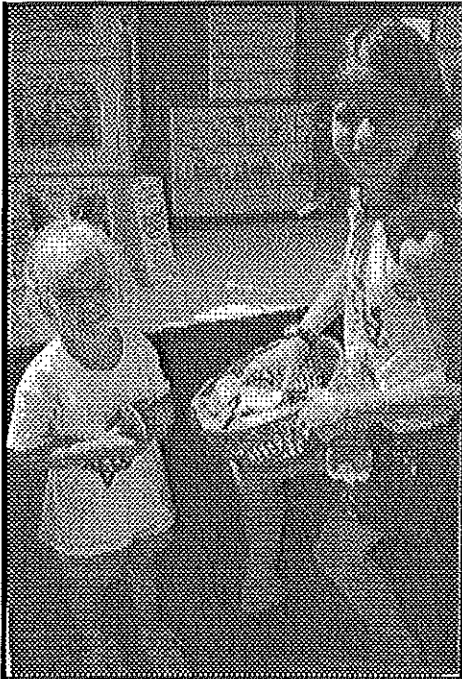
inscription "The Crossroads of America" and 10 stars, symbolizing Indiana as the 19th state to be admitted to the Union.

CSI was one of six groups asked to participate in the history portion of the event since the motto "The Crossroads of America" pertains to the history of transportation in Indiana. The other groups were the Conner Prairie Settlement with pioneer transportation; the Indiana Historical Bureau with Indiana's general history of transportation; the Indiana Transportation Museum with materials about the railroads; the Indiana Department of Natural Resources with the Freedom Trails Project on the Underground

Above: The new Indiana state quarter.  
Below top: The Brinks' truck arrives with the quarters.

Below bottom: National City Bank prepares to distribute the quarters while a guard stands nearby.

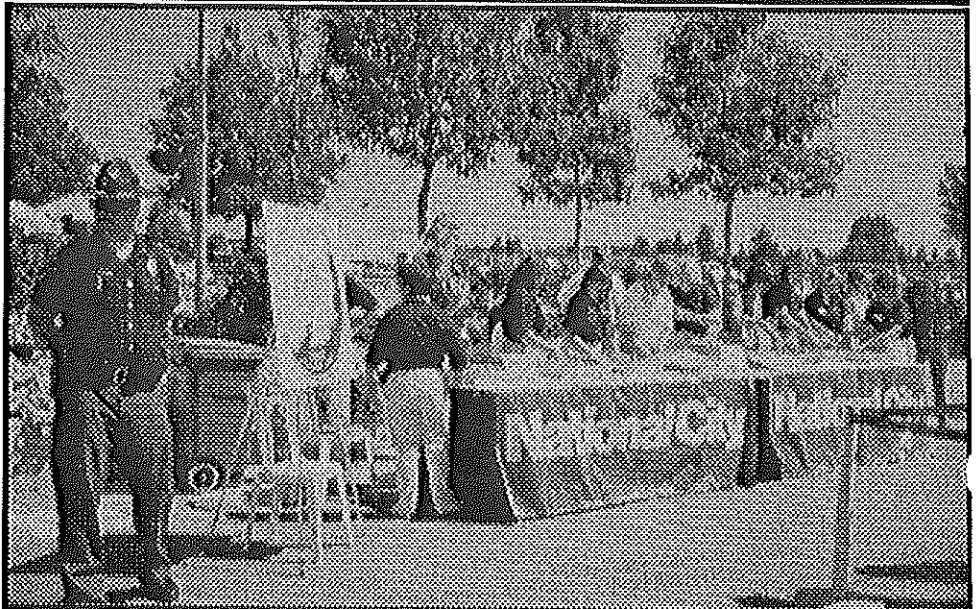
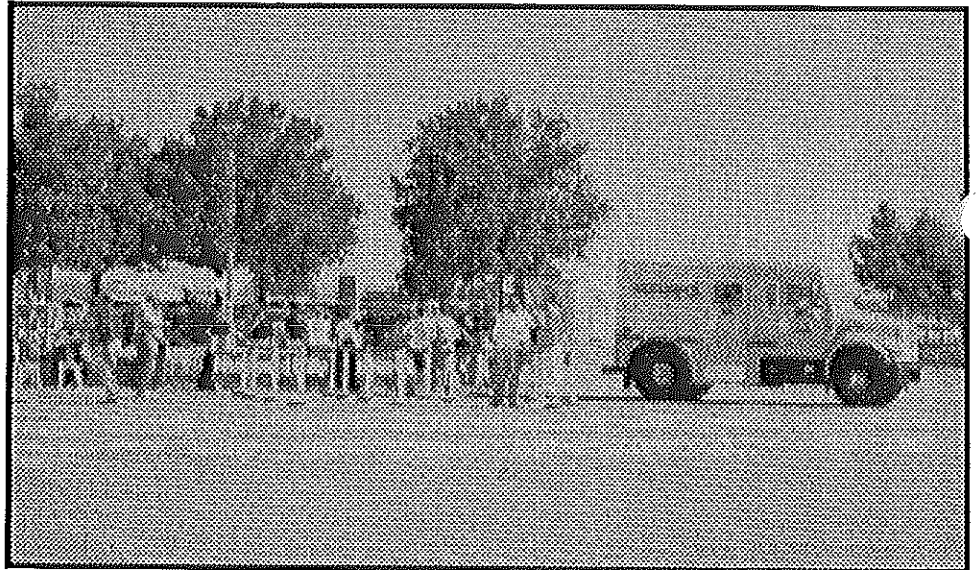
Photos by Bob Schmidt



Two girls chose a CSI past tour button at the display of canal sites.

Photo by Bob Schmidt

As you will recall CSI entered the quarter design contest. Originally there were over 3,700 submissions. Ours was one of the 17 design ideas chosen to be voted on via the internet and local newspapers through which 156,000 votes were cast. The top seven vote-getters were reviewed by Governor Frank O'Bannon from which he chose four to send to the US Mint for review. These four were a basketball player with a racecar, a cardinal, the torch and stars from the state flag, and an image of Chief Little Turtle. The final design approved by the Mint has the image of a racecar superimposed on an outline of the state with the



## INDIANA QUARTER FACT SHEET

### "The Crossroads of America"

- From the days of wilderness explorers to the present, Indiana has served as "The crossroads of America"
- In 1937, the motto became official when the General Assembly adopted it
- Indiana's physical location has destined the state to be a corridor for movement from north to south and east to west
- For French trappers and traders, Indiana was the link between Canada and Louisiana, giving birth to the settlement of Vincennes
- The British saw Indiana's strategic importance, and took over in 1763
- After the American Revolution, and the War of 1812, settlers continued to move through, arriving via the waterways and overland
- By 1816 when Indiana gained statehood, 60,000 people were calling themselves Hoosiers
- Prior to the Civil War, the Underground Railroad flourished throughout the state, and Indiana became a conduit to freedom in Canada for thousands of fleeing slaves
- Indiana today has more interstate highways than any other state in the union
- It is within a one-day's drive of 65 percent of the nation
- In addition to a world-renowned road system, Indiana has numerous transportation options, including:
  - 683 airports, 119 of which are public use
  - 40 railroad lines and over 4,700 miles of track
  - 3 international ports that use Lake Michigan and the Ohio River to import and export goods
- Combined with the state's manufacturing and industrial base, Indiana's transportation systems continue to keep America on the move
- Historically known as agricultural and manufacturing state, Indiana's economy today is much more diverse, with already large and growing sectors that include life sciences, information technology, 21st Century logistics and advanced manufacturing.

### Land of the Indians

- At least a dozen Native American tribes once or still call Indiana home
- Indiana's earliest settlers were nomadic Miami and Potawatomi tribes whose burial mounds are still present in the state
- Other tribes inhabiting the state included:
  - Delaware
  - Wea
  - Kickapoo
  - Mohican
  - Nanticoke
  - Munsee
  - Shawnee
  - Piankashaw
  - Huron

### Indianapolis Motor Speedway

- The racetrack was built in 1909 for automotive research purposes
- Today, the track is best known for hosting auto races -- most famously, the Indianapolis 500
- The oldest auto race in the world, the Indy 500 has been run every year since 1911, except during the two World Wars
- It is the world's largest single-day sporting event
- The Indianapolis 500, held every Memorial Day weekend, is a 500-mile race of 200 laps around a 2.5-mile track
- The Indianapolis Motor Speedway hosts the three largest single-day sporting events in the world:
  - The Indianapolis 500
  - The Brickyard 400 NASCAR race
  - The U.S. Grand Prix.
- The overall economic impact of the three events is equivalent to hosting three Super Bowls in the city each year.

Courtesy the Governor of Indiana's office

Railroad; and the Indiana National Road Association and Historic Land-marks Foundation of Indiana with the Historic National Road signs and the National Scenic Byways brochures.

The governor's office sent each organization a fact sheet about the quarters giving the backgrounds of the various symbols considered for placement on it. It has been scanned into this article as received.

The dedication ceremony began with the Speedway High School 500 Marching Band playing and First Lady Judy O'Bannon speaking about Indiana being the "Crossroads of America." She then started the grand parade which brought Governor O'Bannon to the stage in a race car as it and the Brinks truck with the quarters circled the race track. The Indianapolis Children's Choir sang the "Star Spangled Banner." Short speeches were given by Tony George, Indianapolis Motor Speedway President; Rosario Marin, United States Treasurer; Henrietta Holsman-Fore, United States Mint Director and Donna Weaver, engraver, with the formal presentation of the quarter. The Indianapolis Children's Choir then sang "Back Home Again in Indiana." Governor Frank O'Bannon closed the ceremony with a short speech before releasing the crowd to purchase the newly minted coins.

The printed program given attendees explained why Indiana is the "Crossroads of America." It is quoted here in its entirety:

**From the days of wilderness explorers to the present, Indiana has served as the "Crossroads of America." Its physical location destined Indiana to be a corridor for movement from north to south as well as east to west.**

For French trappers and traders, Indiana was the link between Canada and Louisiana, giving birth to the settlement of Vincennes. After the American Revolution, and the War of 1812, settlers continued to move through, arriving via the waterways and overland. By 1816, when Indiana became a state, 60,000 people had settled here.

In 1827, the National Road (now US 40) reached Indiana. It would eventually connect Atlantic City, New Jersey with San Francisco, California and provide an important path for settlers moving west. Canals were built from the 1830s through the 1850s to connect our cities to major waterways.

Prior to the Civil War, the Underground Railroad flourished throughout the state, and Indiana became a conduit to freedom in Canada for thousands of fleeing slaves.

Indiana has been a leader in the development and manufacture of automobiles since the very beginning, too. At one time, 210 different types of cars were made in Indiana. And, in 1909, four men decided that Indianapolis should have a facility for testing new automobiles. Today, that place is known as the Indianapolis Motor Speedway!

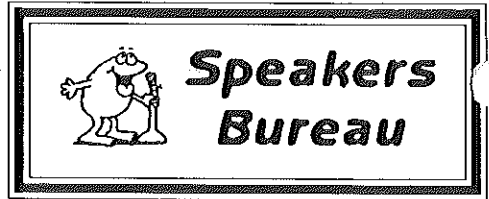
In 1937, the Indiana legislature made "Crossroads of America" the official state motto. To this day, Indiana remains the Crossroads of America. Indiana has more interstate highways than any other state in the union and is

within a one-day's drive of 65 percent of the nation. Combined with the state's manufacturing and industrial base, Indiana's transportation systems continue to keep America on the move and moving through the "Crossroads of America!"

### Wabash Canal Days

Wabash, Indiana celebrated "Canal Days" at the end of July. In conjunction with the festival, the Wabash County Historical Museum had an exhibit about Indiana's canals on July 27 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in a large room of the old Sears building located on the corner of Market and Wabash streets. A huge diagram of a canal boat was drawn on the floor of this building, which is undergoing construction in preparation for the new museum. Beth Stein, Assistant Director to Executive Director Barbara Kasper, came to CSI Headquarters in Ft. Wayne to get display boards and materials that could be copied for distribution to attendees. These were placed on tables around the room. After approximately 100 visitors viewed the large map of where Indiana's canals were purposed and built, they looked at 8" x 10" photographs of remaining canal sites and structures. They were given a map of Indiana and Ohio's canals, information sheets about why canals were built, pictures of a canal boat and locks, and a CSI brochure. They also learned of the Historical Society's need to raise funds to construct both exhibits and an area for traveling exhibits.

Currently all museum items are being inventoried via a computer program, boxed and placed in storage. After a museum designer is hired and funds raised, the group hopes to have the museum completed for a 2003 grand opening. For more information or to volunteer



to offer your services in constructing exhibits call (260) 563-9050.

Fort Wayne, IN

Forty-six residents of The Towne House retirement community gathered in Towne Center to learn the history of Indiana's canals at 2:30 p.m. on August 14, 2002. The community is located within a few yards of the St. Joseph Feeder Canal that fed water into the mainline Wabash & Erie Canal from the St. Joseph River. Bob Schmidt dressed as a canal boat captain blew a canal horn and passed out maps showing the routes of canals in Indiana and Ohio. He pointed out that the success of New York's Erie Canal led to canals being built by other states. He also told how the W&E Canal was built from revenue of the sale of land granted by the federal government. He introduced Miss Caroline, a canal traveler in 1847.

Carolyn Schmidt as Miss Caroline talked about the various types of canal structures she had seen on her canal boat journey from Toledo, OH to Ft. Wayne, IN. She also described the difference between canal packet boats and freight boats. She pointed out that building the canal and its structures was hard dirty work and that the contractors, superintendents, and workers were proud of their work.

The question and answer period following the program lasted for almost an hour. Residents wanted more information about where they could see the canal and ride on a boat. They asked Karen Poch, program director, to plan a bus trip to Grand Rapids, OH next spring as this year's programs are already planned.

Terre Haute, IN

The Metropolitan Planning Organization met September 24-26 in Terre Haute, Indiana. Tuesday evening's registration and dinner were held at Mogger's. Wednesday and Thursday's meetings were held at the Holiday Inn with a field trip to the Frank Kleptz Gallery of Legends, a historic transportation museum of over fifty vintage automobiles, vintage bicycles, scooters, and other historic transportation artifacts on Wednesday afternoon.

On Wednesday at 12:20-1:30 PM a panel moderated by Pat Martin, chief transportation planner for the West Central Indiana Economic Development District in Terre Haute, presented speeches on Historic Transportation Facilities. Those speaking were Mike Cooper of Meyers Engineering, Trish Eccles of the Indiana National Road Association, and Jeff Koehler, Canal Society of Indiana board member and Vigo county historian from Center Point. Jeff's speech was given in an "upside-down funnel" approach starting with Indiana's canals in general, then talking more specifically about the Wabash & Erie Canal, and then completing his speech with the proposed Lock #47 project at Riley and application for a Transportation Enhancement grant from the FHWA. Pat Martin then spoke about how a \$750,000 grant for the lock was applied for last year but not received due to the many grants sought from the area. He is optimistic that at least over half of the grant will be rewarded this year and further funding can be found through a phase 2 application to the county for the balance of funds.

lock in the State of Indiana." It was made of finely cut stone, stood ten feet high and was over 100 ft. long.

The project is designed to archaeologically study the site, stabilize the existing western lock wall, replicate the missing eastern wall, build a parking lot and trails to the site and establish a Vigo county lock park. Hopefully the project will soon be underway.

Besides speaking at this seminar, Jeff also represented CSI at

a planning meeting for the I-69 route in southern Indiana. It was held in the State Capitol building.

Jeff also sent pictures to CSI headquarters of the portion of the Wabash & Erie Canal near Riley that was cut recently when a coal drag line was moved to a nearby strip mine. The pictures were taken by Tim Wright at the time and show the cut through the canal bank and the layers of soil beneath.

Canal bank cut at Riley. Photos - Tim Wright



Lock 47 was built in 1838 near Riley, IN as a part of the 468-mile-long Wabash & Erie Canal. It was special in that most of the locks on this canal were built of timber and not fine stone. The lock was described by William J. Ball, resident canal engineer in 1853, as "the best

## Memoirs of Jennie E. Brown Rader 1890-1904

*A portion of the memoirs of Jennie Rader were found by your editor in the Huntington City Township Library in Huntington, IN, and are reprinted here. Jennie was born in Roanoke, IN as Jennie Brown. She later married a man named Rader. She died in New York City in June of 1946.*

My first fifteen years paralleled the completion and closing of the Wabash-Erie Canal. I was two years old when the first steam canal boat\* left Huntington ten miles South of Roanoke on September 25, 1862. An article in a Toledo, Ohio, newspaper re-printed in the Indiana Herald a few days later, tells us - "that the Canal propeller 'Buffalo' arrived here yesterday from Huntington with a full load of wheat and flour. The 'B' is a new boat now on its first trip and is represented as fulfilling in every respect the anticipation of her builder and owner, Captain Morgan. She left Huntington Thursday morning and arrived here at 5 and a half P.M. yesterday making the run of 129 miles in 72 hours, from which should be deducted five hours detention at Fort Wayne and one hour at Providence (OH). The engineer of the boat informs us that one cord of wood is amply sufficient for a 24-hour run, demonstrating that as far as economy is concerned, that has been fully secured by the introduction of steam as a motive power on our Canal." I like to think I saw the 'Buffalo' as it passed through Roanoke.

From the time I was four or five and until my early teens I lived on the banks of the Canal. Many of my earliest recollections center about the Canal with its canoes, wheat boats and the house boat of Captain Vandocker. The captain's small

daughter was his cook and housekeeper. Many tales were spun about their home life on the Upper Basin. Wheat boats were drawn by mules who were beaten by the swearing mule drivers, flourishing their long black snake whips as they guided the mules along the towpath. This is quite a contrast in comparison with the electric mules of today used on the Panama Canal. The Canal did not continue long enough for progress to demand many changes. An article in a Toledo newspaper of the period records its methods of accomplishment. Three to six horses in tandem were driven along the side of the Canal and fastened to the boat by a long tow rope perhaps 200 feet in length. This required shift of horses and drivers. All types of shipping was carried on. There were, for instance, the store boats. Mother took me to see one where everything for sale was made of glass. We bought a pitcher and a high stemmed cake plate. I was thrilled and excited! It was a great adventure! I had seen many of these boats and held them in awe, but, I had never been on one. From that moment I became even more fascinated with life on the canal.

Reading of Canal operations of those early years, one can only marvel at the many difficulties overcome. As winter came on, all northern canals had navigation trouble. Ice would stop a boat but most of them kept moving until November or December. They were forced to remain, caught in the ice, until early Spring. This often caused great hardships.

A year after the Wabash-Erie Canal was completed in 1836 (to Huntington), packet service on that route was probably the fastest in the country. Canal boats ran regularly from Toledo, Ohio to Lafayette,

Indiana in two days and eight hours at the rate of nearly 104 miles per day. In order to maintain fast passenger service it was necessary to change horses every eight or ten miles. Since the Canal was a public highway there were many kinds of boats on it. Anyone able to pay the tolls could build canal boats and operate them. But later carrying business was done mostly by professional boatmen. Floating saloons and boats of entertainment were popular. Indiana newspapers advertised floating palaces in which a circus performed as it plied the Wabash-Erie Canal. Each boat was a source of pride to the captain and his crew. Boats were often enlivened by bright colors on their exteriors. The Wabash-Erie had one popular packet named "The Silver Bill." It was drawn by gray mules said to have worn silver mounted harness with tinkling bells. Some outfits had bright brass or nickel mounting. Bangles were distinguishing features.

If today we could see one of these boats, seventy or eight feet long, only eleven feet wide, with primitive concessions to comfort and sanitation, one would marvel at the exaggerated ideas of magnificence so well described. It was said that a man of medium height had difficulty walking to and fro in the cabins. It was the brightly painted exteriors which provided the glamour.

The "Indiana" for example, had a red and black under body, white upper cabin, green shutters. Its twenty four side windows had red curtains. Boats of that day carried many queer cargoes. Often one would carry two or three hundred barrels of ashes, in great demand for manufacturing lye, potash, soap and other products. Immense cargoes of fire wood were hauled for little coal was used until well into the nineteenth century. These packets ran on no scheduled time but started when there was a full load of passengers who arrived when they could conveniently.



I was on the Canal as soon as I was old enough to learn to skate but when the Canal was open it was great fun to spin the logs when they drifted down into the Basin at my back door. My recollection is that I became quite an expert. Six to ten logs were linked together to make a single raft. They were built in sections just the size to go through the locks. Rafts would float down the Wabash River or creek to the Canal and then would be towed through by mules. A crew of four or five men handled such a raft. They slept in a rough board shelter built on one side of the section. There were rules against "parking" in the Canal or within one.....(the rest of the pages were missing)

*\*Although attempts were made to power canal boats with steam, the fact that their higher speeds washed out the canal banks kept them from replacing the horses and mules.*

### Wabash and Erie Canal

Charles Davis, CSI member from Rockville, IN sent the following article that appeared in the Rockville Republican on December 15, 1880 that was reprinted from the Daily Journal about who owned the bed of the Wabash and Erie Canal after it was sold.

#### Wabash and Erie Canal

There was a decision rendered by the Supreme Court of the State, a few days ago, in relation to the title to the bed of the Wabash and Erie canal which is of more than local interest.

Ever since this canal was ordered to be sold by a decree of the United States Circuit Court, there have been parties along its line who contested the State's title, claiming that the State when she took the ground on which to make the canal took only an easement, and not a fee-simple title to the same. The Supreme Court, in a well-considered case, known as the Burkhart case, more than eight years ago, held that under the statutes the State took the fee simple to the bed of the canal. — Under this decision the United

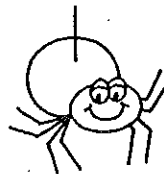
States Circuit Court ordered the canal sold and purchasers all along its line bought it. Afterwards, in what was known as the Fleming case, the Supreme Court affirmed its ruling in the Burkhart case, and held the State's interest was in fee.

In the case recently decided the Supreme Court has again affirmed the opinions held in the two former decisions and decided that the State's title to the bed of the Wabash and Erie canal was a fee-simple title, and that the parties who purchased under the decree of the United States Circuit Court acquired a title in fee-simple.

How the Supreme Court could have held otherwise we are at a loss to know. The doctrine of *stare desises*, a doctrine as old as the hills, will find the purchasers of this canal, under the first decision of our Supreme Court, an absolute title in fee. And, as the Supreme Court of the United States has recently held, though the \_\_\_\_\_ may overrule their former decisions, the rights acquired under them become invested and can not be interfered with—that such overruling "can have only a prospective, but no a retroactive, influence."

We suppose this last decision of our Supreme Court on this important question settles permanently and forever the title to the Wabash and Erie canal, and the parties who purchased all the interest the State had in it, at the receiver's sale, will be allowed the full and peaceable enjoyment of their property. Further litigation in relation to a title so well settled would seem either vindictive or foolish.—

Web Sites



### A Canal Chronology

Chuck Huppert, CSI vice-president from Indianapolis, found a wonderful canal chronology from 4,000 B. C. to 1996 on the web. <http://home.eznet.net/~dmlnor/Canals.html>

### Ohio Canal Lands May Be Sold

A stakeholders meeting was held in the Canal Room of the City Utility Building in St. Mary's, Ohio on Friday August 23, 2002. The purpose of the meeting was to determine what groups would assist Ohio's DNR in establishing a procedure to review applications to lease or buy portions of canal land in Ohio. The state retains the right to control the water on all watered sections of the canals, sometimes retains an easement for public use, and stipulates that the land may not be resold for ten years.

In the past applications for 1/4 to 1/2 acre plots were received from adjacent landowners whose buildings or lawns encroached onto these lands or for larger parcels from municipalities who wished to develop the land for public use. The state first checked to see if there were historic canal structures on or near the property or if there were places where trails or other recreational areas might be created. They usually asked local officials if they knew of such sites or plans to use the land. These officials may not have had any canal interests. Therefore it is important to establish a sort of "clearing house" among those with canal interests before this land is leased or sold.

Ohio has given Paulding county the maintenance of the Wabash & Erie Canal from Junction, OH to the Indiana/Ohio state line. The Cincinnati & Whitewater Canal, built by private investors, is not owned by the state. The main canals from which the planners will come are the Ohio and Erie and the Miami and Erie. MECCA (Miami & Erie Canal Corridor Association) wants to be the lead group for that canal. Carolyn Schmidt, representing the Maumee Valley Heritage Corridor, asked that MVHC as well as Toledo Metroparks be included in the planning process.

# CANAWLERS AT REST

## WILLIAM S. EDSALL

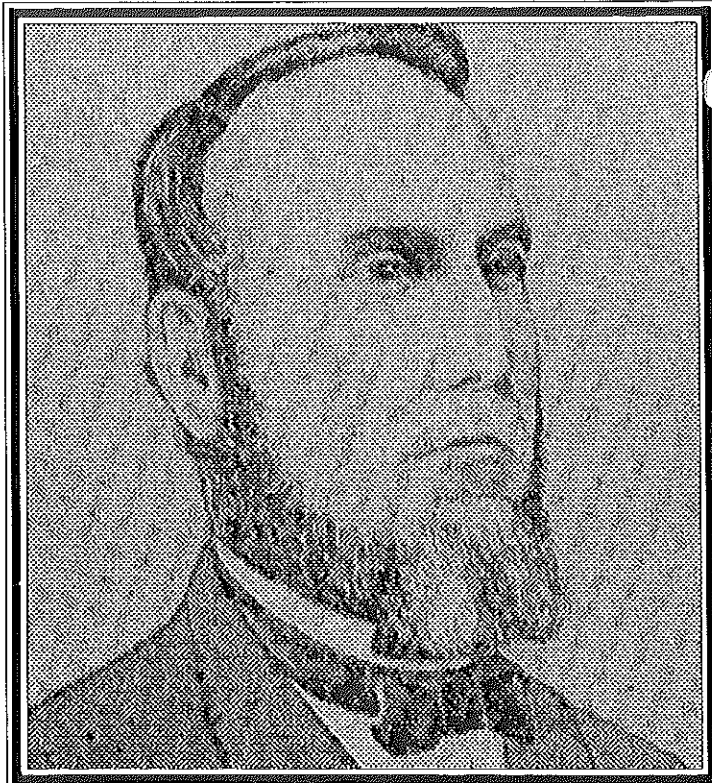
**b. Apr. 1809**

**d. Nov. 29, 1876**

**By Cynthia Powers**

Drawing by Morris R. Perry from  
"Pioneers Resting in Lindenwood."

"Sad and Troubled Was His Life.  
May His Rest Be Sweet."



Edsall was born in April, 1809, in Orange county, New York, and was the fourth son of Peter and Catharine Edsall. They, with their four children, emigrated from New York in 1812, proceeding as far as Pittsburgh in wagons, and thence in a flatboat on the Ohio River to Cincinnati. Here they landed, and fastening the boat to a large tree on the south bank of the river, encamped for the night. Before morning a heavy wind storm came up which tore up the tree by the roots, hurling it upon the flatboat, which was lost, together with the entire outfit of the Edsalls, including the Bible which contained their family record.

From this point, nothing daunted, they proceeded to Montgomery county, O., where they "farmed" rented land for two years.

Whence they removed to Darke county, Ohio, and afterwards to St. Mary's, O. At that time the Indian treaties were being made at those points, calling together a great many people, and the Edsall's, by keeping a boarding house, accumulated sufficient means to purchase eighty acres of land at Shane's crossing. At this latter point the father of our subject died in 1822, leaving a widow and nine children who removed to this point, arriving here in 1824, fifty-two years ago.

The sons then selected their avocations for life. Samuel, the eldest, who died here in 1865, was apprenticed to Col. Hugh Hanna as a carpenter and joiner; John became a tailor, and Simon, who still lives here, engaged in farming.

Our subject, Wm. S. Edsall, in 1826 joined the corps of United States topographical engineers who were

So reads the tombstone of William S. Edsall in Lindenwood Cemetery in Ft. Wayne, IN. The inscription probably alludes to his financial ups and downs, and to the fact that his wife, Louisa, had died almost 20 years before. Mr. Edsall's canal connection is that he was a surveyor for the canal from 1826-28, before becoming a trader and a partner in constructing the plank road from Fort Wayne to Bluffton about 1850.

Librarians at the Allen County Public Library found Mr. Edsall's obituary in the Fort Wayne Sentinel of Friday, December 1, 1876. I quote from it now:

"Mr. William S. Edsall, esq., who was stricken with paralysis in the county clerk's office last Saturday noon, lingered until Wednesday evening at 8:27 (illegible) when his death took place. From the time of his attack until the end he was in an unconscious condition. Everything was done for him that medical skill could devise or the affection of devoted relatives suggest, but all in vain, for the hand of death was upon him. The following carefully prepared sketch of his life will be of interest to all who knew him.

.....A sketch of his life is really a sketch of Fort Wayne from the time that she was a mere Indian trading post to the present day.



detailed to survey a route for the Wabash and Erie Canal. In the course of that year the survey was commenced at Fort Wayne, but the entire corps was prostrated by sickness and the chief, Col. James Skinner, died in the old fort. He was succeeded by Col. Asa Moore, who prosecuted the survey to the mouth of the Tippecanoe, and he, too died at his post in 1828. Mr. Edsall remained with this corps until Col. Moore's death and suffered much from the prevalent diseases.

...The widow Edsall occupied a cabin on the St. Mary's River, near the site of the present county jail. When the Indians came here to trade they encamped on the opposite bank of the river, and young Edsall, having an eye to business, established a ferry for the purpose of carrying the Indians and the traders across the river. While thus engaged he met the late W. G. Ewing, who conceived a liking for him, and employed him to assist in their extensive Indian business. He entered their service in 1826 and remained with them until 1832, passing the last two years with G. W. Ewing at Logansport. In that year, having attained his majority, the Ewings purchased a stock of goods for him, and he engaged in business at Huntington, they sharing the profits of the venture. In the same year he was appointed postmaster in Huntington, and in 1833 was chosen clerk and recorder of Huntington, Whitley and Wabash counties. In 1836 he resigned these positions, closed up his business, and returned to Fort Wayne, where he engaged in mercantile pursuits in partnership with his brother, Maj. Samuel Edsall until 1839. In that year he again formed a connection with G. W. and W. G. Ewing, taking a third interest in the firm, which was known as Ewing, Edsall & Co. They did a very extensive business in furs, covering territory as far west as the Mississippi River. In 1839 Mr. Edsall made a business tour on horseback to Chicago, Joliet, Ottawa, Rock Island, and Dubuque, thence to Galena, and Madison, Wisconsin. In this trip it is said he frequently rode thirty miles without finding a human habitation.

By reason of ruinous competition with the American Fur Company, Ewing, Edsall and Co. lost heavily, and in 1841 the firm dissolved.

In 1840 Mr. Edsall was elected a member of the first common council of the City of Fort Wayne. The other members were Wm. Rockhill, Thos. Hamilton, Madison Sweetzer, Samuel Edsall, and Wm. L. Moon, none of whom survive.

In 1840 Mr. Edsall was appointed register of the United States land office in Fort Wayne, which position he held until 1847. In 1846 (1848? the obituary was very sorry) he again formed a partnership with Maj. Edsall in the mercantile and milling business, which was maintained until 1849.(again barely legible)

About this time he, in company with Judge Hanna,

Samuel Edsall and others, organized the Fort Wayne and Bluffton Turnpike Company, and built the plank road from Bluffton to this city, which enterprise proved a great benefit to Fort Wayne. (This road cost the businessmen \$40,000.)

In 1863, the Messrs. Edsall made a contract for the grading, masonry, and ties of the Lake Erie, Wabash and St. Louis RR (now the T. W. and W.) from the Ohio state line to the Wabash River, a distance of forty-three miles. This enterprise they prosecuted with vigor, and notwithstanding a great financial crisis, which prevented the company from meeting its obligations, and the cholera which swept over the country, they completed their contract in the spring of 1856. By means of their energy and good credit they were enabled to pay laborers in full, although the company had failed to pay them.

Mr. Edsall was also one of the contractors for building the Wabash and Erie Canal, and did a great deal of work on that important enterprise.

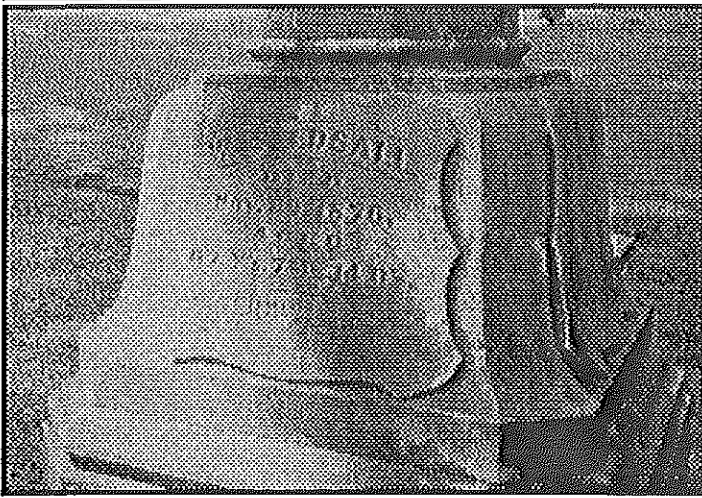
From 1856 to 1865 Mr. Edsall was engaged in the commission and produce business in Fort Wayne. In 1865 he moved to Chicago, and embarked in similar pursuits. In 1868 he returned here and in 1870 was chosen without opposition to the office of county clerk, which he filled until 1874. Since that time he has enjoyed a well-earned respite from labor. For the past year his health has been gradually failing, and he himself has realized that his time was drawing nigh.

It will be seen from the above that Mr. Edsall has filled a large place in our local \_\_\_\_\_ (illegible), and has been outdone by few in his successful efforts to built up Fort Wayne and advance her material interests. His career has been a checkered (sic) one, and has been subject to many fluctuations (?) of fortune. In the various enterprises in which he was engaged he made and lost vast sums of money, but fortunately in his declining years he enjoyed a handsome competence, and he leaves a goodly amount of property.

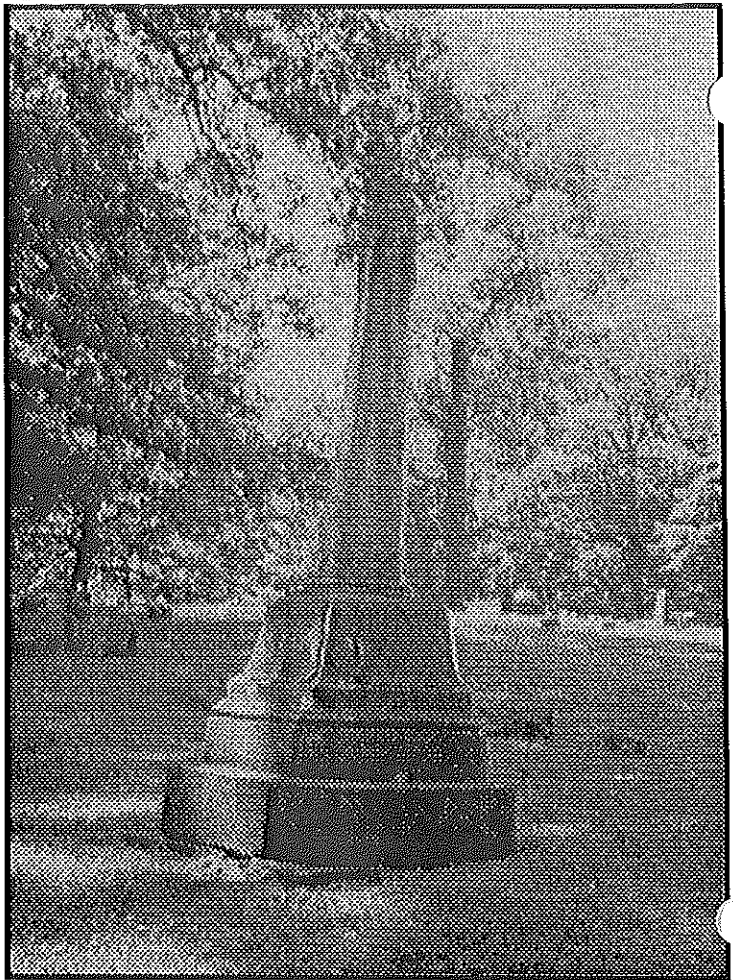
Mr. Edsall never had any schooling, and it was to his unflagging industry, his indefatigable energy, and his active mind that he owed the prominence he attained. He was kind hearted, generous to a fault; every ready to assist the needy, to help the unfortunate or to sustain a friend. He was of a very affectionate and forgiving disposition and though quick to anger, was just as quick to forget his grievance, and to shake hands with one who had wronged him. ....

He was married, early in life, to Miss McCarty, daughter of Gen. McCarty, with whom he lived happily until her death in 1857.

He leaves four children, C. W. Edsall, Jos. W. Edsall, Mrs. Willis D. Maier and Mrs. Henry Colerick; a brother, Simon Edsall, esq., and two sisters, Mr. Wm. H. Coombs and Mrs. Rugg."

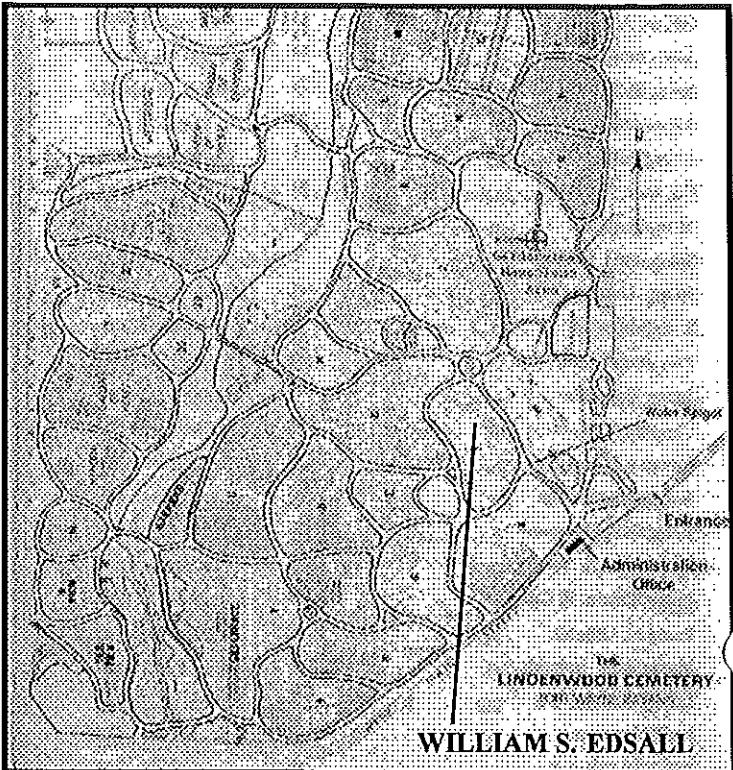


The article goes on to say that Mr. Edsall's funeral was going on at press time. It took place at his home, still standing at the corner of Main and Cass Sts. The service was conducted by Rev. M. Crosley, of the Universalist Church. In the 1800s there were several small Universalist churches in Allen County, including one in Hunteertown and one in Yoder. They believed in universal salvation. Although all the Universalist churches died out in Allen County, the denomination merged with the Unitarians in 1961. One of Mr. Edsall's pallbearers was a Unitarian: Hugh McCullough, who had just served as Secretary of the Treasury under Presidents Lincoln and Johnson (and of whom no mention is made in the Lincoln Museum in Fort Wayne!)



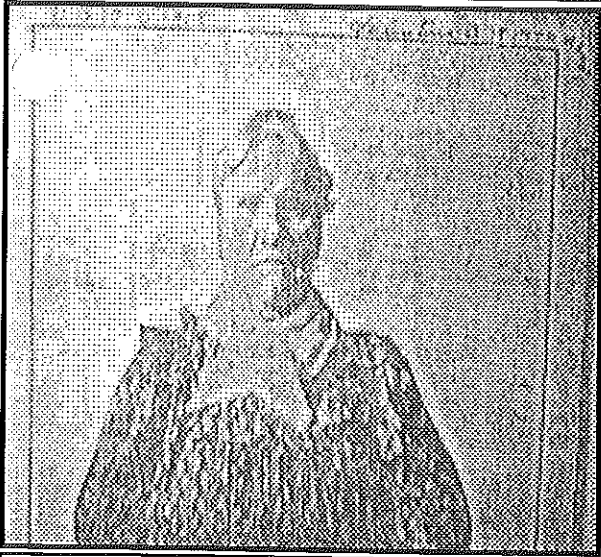
William S. Edsall's grave is located on Lot 62 Section F of Lindenwood Cemetery in Fort Wayne, IN. Photos by Cynthia Powers  
Map of Lindenwood Cemetery from "Pioneers Resting in Historic Lindenwood."

Mr. Edsall's grave, and that of his wife Louisa (of whom so little mention is made in his obituary;) is in Lindenwood cemetery section F lot 62, near the entrance. Along with the inscription mentioned in the title, other sides of the monument say: "gone forever, living in the heart left to mourn" and "seperated (sic) in life, in death they are united." It says that Louisa McCarty Edsall died March 13, 1857, aged 38 years, 8 mos., 19 days. Her parents are listed on the stone: Desdemona Harrison and Jonathan McCarty.



WILLIAM S. EDSALL

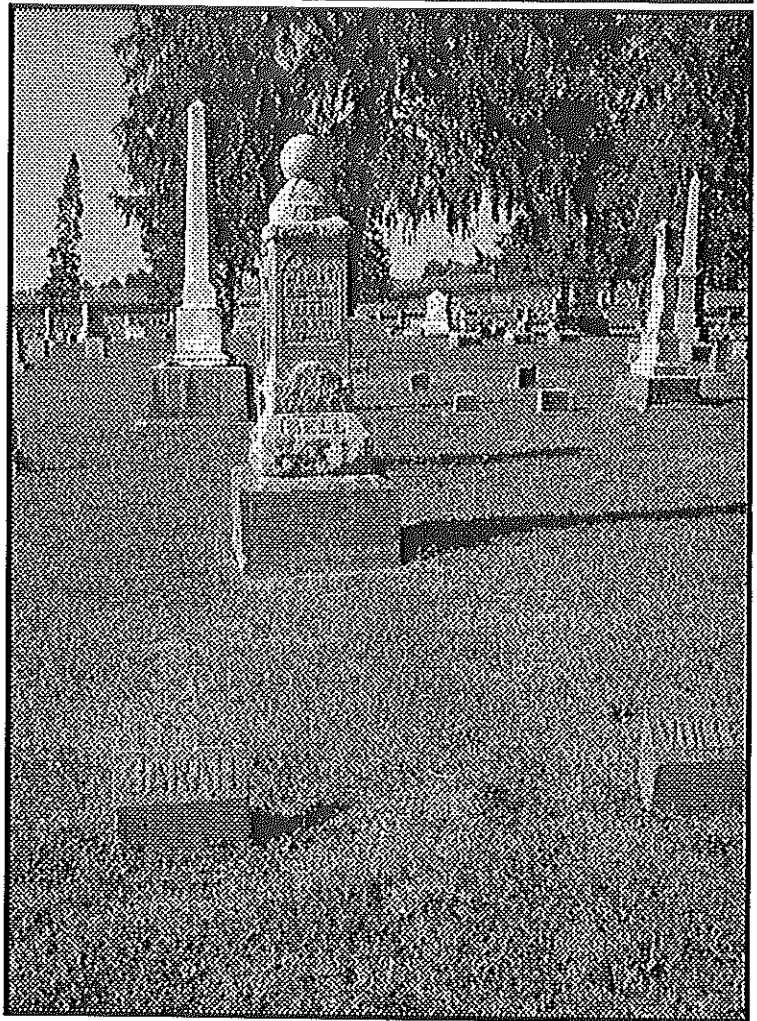
The House of William S. Edsall by Thomas J. Cramton states that Edsall died insolvent with the mortgage company foreclosing on his two story brick home that faced Main Street shortly after his death. Apparently after his brother Samuel, who was his financial advisor, died in 1865, William soon acquired heavy financial debts and lost the Edsall house to a banker in 1866 for \$106 in delinquent taxes. He moved to Chicago leaving his family with relatives who paid off the mortgage. He returned in 1874, regained possession of the home and completely refurbished it. His funeral was conducted in its east parlor. "When his estate was finally settled in 1887, Edsall's personal estate amounted to \$97.15; he had no real estate, and his debts were \$5302.12, plus about nine years' interest."



SARAH "SALLY" SELL

After The Hoosier Packet was at the printers last month, CSI headquarters received these pictures from Phyllis Mattheis, CSI member from Cambridge City, IN, for her "Canawlers At Rest" article about Elbridge Gerry Vinton, Valentine Sell and Sarah Sell.

The photo at the right shows the large Sell marker that reads "Valentine Sell 1818-1902 Sarah His Wife 1827-1918" and the two small stones that read "Sarah" and "Volley."

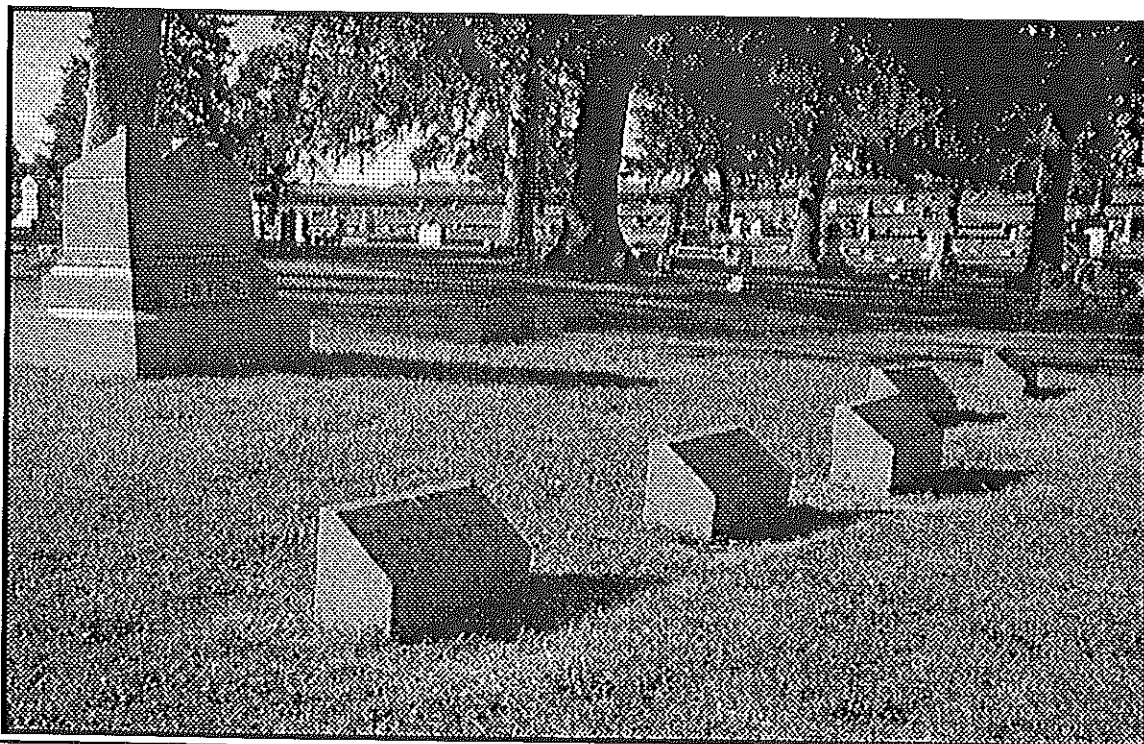


The photo below shows the large Vinton marker with the smaller stones in front of it.

Photos by Phyllis Mattheis

# SELL

# V I N T O N



# M A R K E R S



August 2, 2002 - Huntertown

"Amateur Historian Unlocks Past of Huntertown Veteran" was the title of an article in the Fort Wayne Journal-Gazette. It said that Shirley Underwood, a retired teacher whose father wrote a history of the Huntertown Methodist Church, has become the unofficial historian of the small community. She is the executive director of the Huntertown Historical Society and organized a veterans exhibit for the Huntertown Heritage Days. Veterans mentioned in the article were Keith McComb and Jane Hamilton-Merritt. McComb was on the plane that delivered reconnaissance photos to military commanders such as Patton. During the 1944 cold winter at the Battle of the Bulge in Nancy, France, he was unloading supplies and found a crate that contained a machine that helped warm the oil in his plane. It was from Fort Wayne, IN so he hugged the crate. Hamilton-Merritt, a Vietnam vet, is nationally known for "her activism on behalf of a persecuted tribe of Laotian hill people known as the Hmong."

A non-wartime story Underwood relates is of a marriage between a Wabash & Erie Canal worker named Nathaniel Fitch. In 1834 Fitch walked into a tavern in Auburn, IN seeking a wife. He asked those present if they knew of someone to marry him. One of the tavern's employees went to the kitchen and returned with a girl named Sarah DeLong, who was from Germany and couldn't speak any English. Fitch said, "She'll do." They were the first couple to be married in the township. They eventually had 15 children.  
Vernene Miller, Ft. Wayne, IN

August 3 - Delphi, IN

A Logansport Pharos-Tribune article entitled "Settlers Return to Delphi" said that the 147th annual Carroll County Old Settlers Days was held August 7-11. It was originally started in 1855 to bring together settlers to meet and discuss their experiences throughout the county's history and was a day long event. Today the 4-day event draws thousands to the courthouse lawn where demonstrations of basket weaving, blacksmithing, bobbin lace, cross cut sawing, needlework, pottery making, quilting, rug making, shingle making, spinning, weaving, and tatting are given. The Carroll County Historical Society Museum displays old tools and Indian artifacts. They also had live entertainment and children's games.

The 18th annual Rendezvous camped at the Wabash & Erie Canal Park on North Washington St. on Thursday through Sunday. It featured a pioneer village with primitive teepees and lodges. Re-enactors dressed in pre-1840 styles and spoke with visitors about what life was like many years ago.

Annetta Baker, CSI member, Winamac, IN

August 20 - Indianapolis

"Survival In The City" was the title of an article about monitoring turtles in the Central Canal that appeared in the Indianapolis Star. Students of assistant professor Travis Ryan at Butler University are catching six species of turtles in live traps on the Indianapolis Water Company's portion of the Central Canal between Broad Ripple at the White River to 30th Street. Chuck Huppert, CSI vice-president, has one of the traps in his front yard. So far more than 1,000 individual turtles have been caught, taken to the lab at Butler University to be recorded as to size, sex, estimated age and then have their shells marked to be returned to the canal the following day.

Thirty-six of the turtles have had transmitters attached to the edge of their shells to record the movement. Some turtles were found to travel only 300 meters a day while others traveled over a mile a day.

The daily catch of turtles is approximately 10 or fifteen. More turtles are caught around the Rocky Ripple area when tree branches dip into the canal. There 67 turtles were caught on one day. Some turtles cross the canal towpath to get to a nearby pond. Turtles range in size from a palm-size musk (stink pot) turtle to a 25-pound snapping turtle.

Of the six species recorded nearly half of them are map turtles, which are about the size of a quarter when they hatch and can grow up to five pounds. They are easily seen basking on rocks or floating logs on the canal. They eat snails.

In second place are musk turtles that swim on the bottom of the canal scavenging for a wide variety of things to eat. They are about 6 inches in size and weigh around a half of a pound. Musk glands release a stench which does not seem to bother the dozens of leeches attached to them.

The other four species are the common snapping turtle, which eats fish or whatever it finds and has a dangerous bite; the red-eared slider, which is the size of a map turtle and is usually found in ponds in the eastern U. S.; the painted turtle, which has bright marks on its face and legs and is smaller than maps and sliders; and the spiny soft-shell turtle, which has a snorkel-like nose and soft, fleshy shells. They bite. The latter two are found about one for every fifty turtles caught; however, the soft-shell is believed to be abundant in the canal.

This study of the life and future of urban turtles will be continued for several years.  
Chuck Huppert, CSI vice-president, Indianapolis